

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1, 13, 14, 17 and 25 without prejudice or disclaimer.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim ~~18~~, wherein if an overlap region exists between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, step (d) is practiced by setting the price point for the product at a midpoint of the overlap region.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein step (e) is practiced by terminating the transaction.

5. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein step (e) is practiced by notifying the seller and the buyer that an overlap region does not exist and requesting the seller and the buyer to either (1) adjust the respective lower limit price and upper limit bid, or (2) terminate the transaction.

6. (Original) A method according to claim 5, further comprising, after step (e), either (1) receiving an adjusted lower limit price and an adjusted upper limit bid and repeating steps (c)-(e), or (2) receiving an instruction to terminate the transaction.

7. (Original) A method according to claim 5, further comprising, after step (e) receiving one of an adjusted lower limit price or an adjusted upper limit bid, and repeating steps (c)-(e).

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim ~~4~~¹⁸, wherein step (e) is practiced by setting a theoretical price point at a midpoint between the lower limit price and the upper limit bid.

10. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim ~~4~~¹⁸, further comprising providing the seller and the buyer with an opportunity to agree on the theoretical price point, completing the transaction only if both the seller and the buyer agree on the theoretical price point, and otherwise terminating the transaction.

11. (Original) A method according to claim 10, further comprising providing a component for preventing gaming of the system.

12. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim ~~4~~¹⁸, wherein step (e) is further practiced by displaying a shortage region representing a difference between the lower limit price and the upper limit bid to the seller and the buyer.

13-14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) ~~A method according to claim 4~~^{A method of conducting} a transaction between a buyer and a seller over a global network with a computer system, the method comprising:

(a) receiving a lower limit price for a product from the seller via the global network, the buyer being unaware of the seller's lower limit price;

(b) receiving an upper limit bid for the product from the buyer via the global network, the seller being unaware of the buyer's upper limit bid;

(c) the computer system comparing the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid;

(d) if an overlap region exists between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the computer system setting a price point for the product within the overlap region that is based on the lower limit price and the upper limit bid; and

(e) if an overlap region does not exist between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the computer system further processing the transaction without seller or buyer input by setting a theoretical price point between the lower limit price and the upper limit bid,

wherein step (a) is practiced by additionally receiving an expiration relating to the product and by receiving a lower limit price range from the seller that varies with time to the expiration.

16. (Currently Amended) ~~A method according to claim 4~~ A method of conducting a transaction between a buyer and a seller over a global network with a computer system, the method comprising:

(a) receiving a lower limit price for a product from the seller via the global network, the buyer being unaware of the seller's lower limit price;

(b) receiving an upper limit bid for the product from the buyer via the global network, the seller being unaware of the buyer's upper limit bid;

(c) the computer system comparing the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid;

(d) if an overlap region exists between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the computer system setting a price point for the product within the overlap region that is based on the lower limit price and the upper limit bid; and

(e) if an overlap region does not exist between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the computer system further processing the transaction without seller or buyer input by setting a theoretical price point between the lower limit price and the upper limit bid,

wherein step (b) is practiced by additionally receiving an expiration relating to the upper limit bid and by receiving an upper limit bid range from the buyer that varies with time to the expiration.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) ~~A method according to claim 1, further comprising A method of conducting a transaction between a buyer and a seller over a global network with a computer system, the method comprising:~~

(a) receiving a lower limit price for a product from the seller via the global network, the buyer being unaware of the seller's lower limit price;

(b) receiving an upper limit bid for the product from the buyer via the global network, the seller being unaware of the buyer's upper limit bid;

(c) the computer system comparing the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid;

(d) if an overlap region exists between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the computer system setting a price point for the product within the overlap region that is based on the lower limit price and the upper limit bid;

(e) if an overlap region does not exist between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the computer system further processing the transaction without seller or buyer input by setting a theoretical price point between the lower limit price and the upper limit bid; and

(f) compiling a database of information relating to sellers, buyers, products and price points.

19. (Previously Presented) A computer system for conducting a transaction between a buyer and a seller, the computer system comprising:

at least one user computer running a computer program that effects input information relating to one of a lower limit price for a product from the seller or an upper limit bid for the product from the buyer, wherein the buyer is unaware of the seller's lower limit price and the seller is unaware of the buyer's upper limit bid; and

a system server running a server program, the at least one user computer and the system server being interconnected by a computer network, the system server receiving the input information and processing the input information with information from other user computers by comparing the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, wherein if an overlap region exists between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the server setting a price point for the product within the overlap region

that is based on the lower limit price and the upper limit bid, and wherein if an overlap region does not exist between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the server further processing the transaction without seller or buyer input by setting a theoretical price point between the lower limit price and the upper limit bid.

20. (Previously Presented) A computer program embodied on a computer-readable medium for conducting a transaction between a buyer and a seller, the computer program comprising:

means for receiving a lower limit price for a product from the seller, the buyer being unaware of the seller's lower limit price;

means for receiving an upper limit bid for the product from the buyer, the seller being unaware of the buyer's upper limit bid; and

means for comparing the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, wherein if an overlap region exists between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the comparing means comprises means for setting a price point for the product within the overlap region that is based on the lower limit price and the upper limit bid, and wherein if an overlap region does not exist between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the comparing means comprises means for further processing the transaction without seller or buyer input by setting a theoretical price point between the lower limit price and the upper limit bid.

21. (Original) A computer program according to claim 20, wherein if an overlap region exists between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the setting means sets the price point for the product at a midpoint of the overlap region.

22-25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising A method of conducting a transaction between a buyer and a seller over a global network with a computer system, the method comprising:

- (a) receiving a lower limit price for a product from the seller via the global network;
- (b) receiving an upper limit bid for the product from the buyer via the global network, wherein step (b) is practiced by allowing only one bid for the product from the buyer;
- (c) the computer system comparing the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid;
- (d) if an overlap region exists between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the computer system setting a price point for the product within the overlap region that is based on the lower limit price and the upper limit bid; and
- (e) if an overlap region does not exist between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, further processing the transaction according to predefined parameters.

27. (Currently Amended) ~~A method according to claim 13, further comprising A method of conducting a transaction between a buyer and a seller over a global network with a computer system, the method comprising:~~

- (a) receiving a lower limit price for a product from the seller via the global network;
- (b) receiving an upper limit bid for the product from the buyer via the global network, wherein step (b) is practiced by allowing only one bid for the product from the buyer;
- (c) the computer system comparing the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid;
- (d) if an overlap region exists between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the computer system setting a price point for the product within the overlap region that is based on the lower limit price and the upper limit bid; and
- (e) compiling a database of information relating to sellers, buyers, products and price points.

28. (Currently Amended) ~~A method according to claim 14, further comprising A method of conducting a transaction between a buyer and a seller over a global network with a computer system, the method comprising:~~

- (a) receiving a lower limit price for a product from the seller via the global network, the buyer being unaware of the seller's lower limit price;

(b) receiving an upper limit bid range from the buyer via the global network that varies with time, the seller being unaware of the buyer's upper limit bid range;

(c) the computer system comparing the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid based on time; and

(d) if an overlap region exists between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid based on time, the computer system setting a price point for the product within the overlap region that is based on the lower limit price and the upper limit bid; and

(e) compiling a database of information relating to sellers, buyers, products and price points.

29. (Currently Amended) ~~A method according to claim 17, further comprising A method of conducting a transaction between a buyer and a seller over a global network with a computer system, the method comprising:~~

(a) receiving a lower limit price for a product from the seller via the global network;

(b) receiving an upper limit bid for the product from the buyer via the global network, wherein step (b) is practiced by allowing only one bid for the product from the buyer;

(c) the computer system comparing the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid;

(d) if an overlap region exists between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the computer system setting a price point for the product within the overlap region that is based on the lower limit price and the upper limit bid; and

(e) compiling a database of information relating to sellers, buyers, products and price points.

30. (Currently Amended) ~~A method according to claim 25, further comprising: A method of conducting a transaction between a buyer and a seller over a global network with a computer system for exchange of a product of decaying value, the method comprising:~~

(a) receiving a lower limit price for the product from the seller via the global network, the buyer being unaware of the seller's lower limit price;

(b) receiving an upper limit bid for the product from the buyer via the global network, the seller being unaware of the buyer's upper limit bid;

(c) receiving an expiration relating to the product and receiving at least one of a lower limit price range from the seller via the global network or an upper limit bid range from the buyer via the global network that varies with time to the expiration;

(d) the computer system comparing the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid relative to time;

(e) if an overlap region exists between the seller lower limit price and the buyer upper limit bid, the computer system setting a price point for the product within the

overlap region that is based on the lower limit price and the upper limit bid and
completing the transaction; and

(f) compiling a database of information relating to sellers, buyers, products and
price points.